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ABSTRACT

The National Study of Effective Title I Schoolwide Programs was initiated to address the lack of information on how schoolwide programs affect teaching and learning and student outcomes and to develop a critical empirical base for strengthening the implementation of Title I programs in service of students in high poverty schools. This paper provides an overview of findings from the preliminary analysis of the study's first year database. In the first section, the rationale and the extant research base on Title I schoolwide programs that provided the research are discussed. In the second section, the study's research design and findings from the preliminary analysis are presented. During the 1997-98 school year, researchers gathered data from 33 schools in 9 urban districts and 4 countywide districts. Of these, 17 were considered more effective schools, and 16 were identified as less effective schools. The concluding section of the paper contains an exploratory discussion of implications for policy development in light of the upcoming Title I reauthorization. The preliminary findings from this project suggest the need for closer links between the federal government and school districts in helping schoolwide programs develop coherent instructional strategies. These federal initiatives constitute what is termed "procedural accountability" in Title I schoolwide policy. Procedural accountability is a useful way to measure the extent to which knowledge is used effectively to meet the legislative expectations of the Title I program. An appendix discusses the research design and the coordination of data collection. (Cont[illegible] 9 tables and 10 references.) (SLD)

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A National Study of Title I Schoolwide Programs: A Synopsis of Interim Findings

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Introduction

The 1994 Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) established an ambitious agenda for systemic improvement in schools with a high concentration of students from at-risk backgrounds. The legislation promotes the schoolwide program as a way to reduce curricular fragmentation and enhance instructional effectiveness for the school as a whole. In other words, the schoolwide initiative calls for a change from the emphasis on regulatory compliance to accountability for policy coherence and coordinated services delivery in the service of student success. These expectations are further reinforced by Public Law 105-78 enacted in November 1997, in which Congress appropriated funding for a national initiative, known as the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program, that provides initial implementation support for schools interested in implementing a research-based, comprehensive approach to school reform.

While the schoolwide approach to reform is clearly at the forefront of the national agenda to improve schooling quality for children who are in circumstances that place them at risk of academic failure, the research base is sorely lacking. An extensive review of the literature on Title I schoolwide programs since the 1988 Hawkins-Stafford amendment suggests that only 13 major empirical studies on schoolwide implementation have been conducted (Wong & Meyer, 1998). The database in most of these studies predated the enactment of IASA in 1994 and has very limited, reliable information on student outcomes in schoolwide programs (Wong & Wang, 1994; Wang & Wong, 1997).

Since the inception of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the results of Title I/Chapter 1 schoolwide project implementation have been mixed. Preliminary findings suggest that, as a group, Title I students in schoolwide project schools perform better than their peers in the more traditionally organized services, such as pull-out programs. Nevertheless, nationwide evaluations suggest that schoolwide projects have continued to encounter a wide range of implementation difficulties (e.g., the need for assessing and monitoring student learning progress, implementation of high-quality professional development programs to ensure a high degree of program implementation, documentation and evaluation of program implementation, and sustained significant improvements in student outcomes). In addition to the equivocal impact of Title I programs on student outcomes, the database on the implementation and outcomes of Title I schoolwide programs is scanty (Wong & Wang, 1994; Wang & Wong, 1997).

Clearly, there is a need to fill the research gap on how schoolwide programs affect teaching and learning and student outcomes, and to develop a critical empirical base for strengthening the implementation of the Title I program in the service of students in high-poverty schools and as Congress considers the upcoming Title I reauthorization. The National Study of Effective Title I Schoolwide Programs, which is the focus of this report, was initiated to address this lack.

The National Study of Effective Title I Schoolwide Programs is a collaborative project between the Laboratory for Student Success (LSS), the Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory at the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education (CRHDE), and four other Regional Educational Laboratories: Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL), North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), and Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE). The twofold goal of the study is to: (a) contribute to a national database on the implementation and outcomes of Title I schoolwide programs since IASA; and (b) provide assistance to schools, districts, and states in their efforts to demonstrate and sustain a high degree of schoolwide programs that are effective in achieving student success in a variety of school

settings across different geographic regions.

This paper provides an overview of findings from the preliminary analysis of the study's Year 1 database. In the first section, the rationale and the extant research base on Title I schoolwide programs that provided the context of the research are discussed. In the second section, the study's research design and findings from the preliminary analysis are presented. The concluding section of the paper includes an exploratory discussion of implications for policy development in light of the upcoming Title I reauthorization.

Clearly, the IASA legislative expectations—high standards for all children and the flexibility to achieve them—are bold and innovative. But to ensure that schoolwide programs in high-poverty neighborhoods have the capacity to meet these legislative goals, we argue for the development of an infrastructure of federal support and federal assessment of student performance. We see the federal role evolving from a watchdog—primarily focused on regulatory compliance—to a more active, supportive partner—providing funding and technical assistance for professional development, for example, and moving toward a vision of monitoring that helps schools and districts identify their needs, exchange information about effective practices, and identify strategies for improvement.

Based on our preliminary findings in this project, we argue for closer links between the federal government and school districts in helping schoolwide programs develop coherent instructional strategies. These federal initiatives constitute what we call "procedural accountability" in Title I schoolwide policy. We encourage Congress to consider this notion of procedural accountability in the 1999 reauthorization of Title I.

Our notion of procedural accountability is grounded in the concept of "procedural knowledge," the knowledge base developed from research and practice about what it takes to successfully implement the legislative expectations of the Title I program. Procedural accountability is a useful way to measure the extent to which knowledge is used effectively to meet the legislative expectations of Title I program. This cross-site study of schoolwide programs will contribute to the further development of procedural accountability in Title I schools.

Rationale and Context

Legislative Development of Schoolwide Programs

The 1994 IASA aimed to make systemic improvements in schools with a high concentration of students from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. For the first time in the history of federal involvement in public education, students receiving federally funded compensatory services (Title I) were no longer left at the margin of school reform. Two of the provisions in this legislation have significant implications for schooling opportunities. The first mandates that district-wide performance standards must apply to all students, including those receiving Title I services, as indicated in the Administration's proposal that "Title I, bilingual education, and dozens of other federal programs must become integral to, not separate from, state and community education reforms that center on high standards" (U.S. Department of Education, 1993, p.3). The second provision included in this legislation promotes a schoolwide initiative in Title I schools with at least 50% low-income students.

The schoolwide program provision of the IASA created an unprecedented incentive for high-poverty schools to allocate Title I resources with fewer restrictions to meet the legislative expectations

for academic performance as set forth in the 1994 legislation. Schoolwide programs are expected to reduce the historically fragmented or categorical character of Title I programs and improve the effectiveness of Title I programs and the effectiveness of entire schools rather than targeting services to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged subpopulations. Although Title I legislation has permitted schoolwide programs since 1978, these programs were rarely implemented prior to the passage of the IASA, partly due to the requirement that school districts match federal grants with their own funds. However, when the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments to Chapter 1 (now Title I) were passed by Congress in 1988, schools in which at least 75% of the students come from low-income backgrounds were able to operate schoolwide programs without matching federal grants with their own school district funds. The passage of the IASA in 1994 further encouraged the adoption of schoolwide programs by lowering the eligibility threshold for schoolwide programs to schools with 50% low-income students beginning in the 1996-97 school year. Indeed, the number of Title I schoolwide programs has grown from fewer than 1,200 in 1991 to over 15,762 in 1997 (this figure does not include information from three states), representing an increase of 1,213%. Currently, almost 80% of the eligible schools participate in the Title I schoolwide program (Wang & Stull, in preparation).

Basic programmatic and procedural requirements of Title I schoolwide program provisions of the 1994 legislation include the following:

- A comprehensive assessment of student performance in relation to state/district subject-area content and assessment standards. Measurable goals and benchmarks for meeting the goals need to be developed.
- An instructional program that is grounded in effective, research-based methods and strategies.
- High-quality professional development for teachers, aides, and other support personnel to enable all students to meet the state/district performance standards.
- Development and implementation of strategies to increase parental and community involvement.
- Strategies to identify how resources from federal, state, local, and private sources will be utilized to coordinate services to support and sustain the reform program.

These legislative expectations are designed to transform Title I from its categorical and isolated character into a program that is an integral part of systemic reform. At issue is the building of a Title I research base that provides systematic information on the implementation of the legislative expectations and student outcomes of schools implementing schoolwide programs.

Title I Schoolwide Program:
The Research Base Prior to the 1994 IASA

Evaluation of schoolwide programs in the initial years has shown largely mixed results. On the one hand, findings suggest that, as a group, Title I students in schoolwide programs perform better than their peers in the more traditionally organized services, such as pull-out instructional settings. However, nationwide evaluations suggest that schoolwide programs have continued to encounter a wide range of implementation difficulties, including the need for assessment of student progress and a general lack of high-quality professional development activities. Furthermore, the database on the implementation and outcomes of Title I schoolwide projects is scanty (Wong & Wang, 1994; Wang & Wong, 1997; Wong & Meyer, 1998).

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The schoolwide program provision of the IASA was enacted with the legislative expectation that Title I resources will be used for all students, each of whom will be held to the same high academic standards. The legislation also includes the expectation that students served by schools with schoolwide programs will demonstrate achievement that is either higher than achievement prior to implementation of the schoolwide program or higher than achievement of comparable schools in the same district. Because the legislation is non-prescriptive, describing only general expectations, schoolwide programs have been implemented in a variety of ways incorporating a range of components (Schenck & Beckstrom, 1993).

The following are highlights of what we have learned from the review of the research base on the implementation of schoolwide programs up to the passage of the IASA in 1994.

Hiring of Additional Staff/Reduced Class Size. Title I funding at schoolwide program schools has been frequently used to hire additional staff, thereby reducing class sizes. Reduced class size was identified as a key component of schoolwide program implementation by principals in slightly more than half of schoolwide program schools during the 1991-92 school year. Schools reported that the average reduction in school class size was from 27 to 19 children. Addition of new staff has not been limited to teachers. For example, counselors, social workers, school-family coordinators, and schoolwide program coordinators have also been hired as a part of schoolwide program services in efforts to strengthen the relationship between the school and families (Millsap et al., 1992).

Staff Development. Principals reported that staff-development activities had been implemented or significantly strengthened in over three-fourths of schoolwide program schools. During the first years of implementation, a majority of districts reported that staff development at schoolwide program schools was more inclusive of teachers and involved more total hours than regular Title I schools. Staff development activities in schoolwide program schools have included: training in reading/language arts instruction, instruction for low-achieving students, and mathematics instruction (Schenck & Beckstrom, 1993). According to principal reports, a teacher at a schoolwide program school received an average of 29 hours of staff development, which is 6 hours more than that received by the average teacher in a Title I school without a schoolwide program (Schenck & Beckstrom, 1993; Millsap et al., 1993).

Shared Decision Making and Teacher Input. The schoolwide program option encourages increased teacher input in decisions affecting the school, emphasizing teacher input into decisions about assessments. Based on reports by principals in one major urban school district, teachers indicated having only a moderate level of input in decisions affecting the school. The majority of teachers had some level of input in decisions about assigning students and teachers to classrooms, hiring staff, and selecting materials or purchasing hardware. Teachers, however, had the greatest input in decisions about selecting materials or purchasing hardware and had the least input in decisions about teacher assignment and replacement (Winfield & Hawkins, 1993). In-depth case studies, however, suggested that a school's change to a schoolwide program tended to be accompanied by a high degree of teacher control and site-based management arrangements (Stringfield et al., 1994).

Distinction of Title I Services from the Regular Program. A central component of the schoolwide programs is the provision of Title I activities and services to all students in the school. One indicator of a program's inclusiveness is the extent to which Title I services cannot be distinguished from services offered for all children (e.g., one that lacks pull-out programs which serve only a subset of students). Sixty percent of schoolwide program school principals reported that their schools operated programs in which Title I services are indistinguishable from services for all children. Among those schools in which Title I services were distinguishable from the regular program, the most common

distinction was the provision of additional services to educationally disadvantaged students who would have received Title I services in a traditional, targeted program. Only 12% of schools reported using a pull-out model (Schenck & Beckstrom, 1993). Principal reports indicated that schoolwide program schools in an unidentified major urban district transitioned toward the provision of Title I services to all children during the first years of implementation, with higher percentages of schools reallocating resources to provide instruction to all students each year (Winfield & Hawkins, 1993).

Classroom Instruction and Curricula. Perhaps the most critical components of schoolwide programs are those which have the potential to directly influence what takes place in the classroom. Schoolwide program principals reported having introduced or significantly strengthened the following components related to curriculum and instruction: computer-assisted instruction (over three-fourths); provision of a coordinated and integrated curriculum and supplemental instruction (two-thirds); and provision of an extended school day (less than one-fourth) (Schenck & Beckstrom, 1993). Schoolwide program schools have adopted a range of programs or curricula, such as Reading Recovery or Success for All, as part of their schoolwide programs (Millsap et al., 1992).

The database on ways in which the schoolwide program option actually impacts classroom instruction is scanty. Some findings have been reported from in-depth case studies analysis. For example, case studies of schoolwide programs identified a common theme of individualizing instruction to the needs of particular students (Stringfield et al., 1994). There is also evidence that suggests the increased capacity of schools and teachers in schoolwide programs to provide instructional services more flexibly, as particular student needs arise, whereas traditional Title I pull-out programs have typically required a more formal process of student selection (Millsap et al., 1992).

Practices Associated with Effective Schools. Schoolwide programs are frequently reported to feature practices associated with effective schools. State Title I coordinators reported that 62% of schoolwide programs in their states incorporated features of effective schools programs in their schoolwide program design (Turnbull et al., 1990). Title I district coordinators reported that a number of effective school components were implemented as part of schoolwide programs through activities such as needs assessment, staff development, changes in classroom instruction, and changes in school management (Millsap et al., 1992). The presence of characteristics associated with effective schools may, reciprocally, impact the successful implementation of schoolwide programs, in that the factors that make good schools may also facilitate innovation and change. Case studies suggested that factors which facilitate innovation included: strong principal leadership and management skills; meaningful, universally agreed-upon goals; a nurturing school culture; well-qualified staff; and organizational mechanisms to support schools problem solving (Stringfield et al., 1994).

Although the literature provides some research-based information on how schools made use of the schoolwide initiative, there is a pressing need for policymakers and practitioners to be much better informed about the implementation requirements and the extent to which program implementation leads to the outcomes in terms of the legislative expectations at school and classroom levels, as outlined in the schoolwide program provision of the IASA.

Research Design of the Study

The National Study of Effective Title I Schoolwide Programs is designed to identify effective policy and practices for achieving student success in Title I schoolwide program schools. The study focused on addressing the following questions:

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- Is there a relationship between the 1994 IASA Title I legislative expectations on higher standards and better student performance?

- Are effective Title I schoolwide program schools more ready to meet these legislative expectations?

- What are major differences between more effective Title I schoolwide program schools compared with the less effective Title I schoolwide program schools?

- What are the characteristic patterns of teaching and learning in classrooms of the more effective Title I schoolwide program schools?

- How can we cull from the database on the more effective Title I schoolwide program schools to bring implementation of schoolwide programs to scale across the country?

Identification of the Study Sample

To develop a comparable pool of more effective and less effective Title I schoolwide schools, statistical methods were used that model the schools academic performance given their characteristics of at-risk student populations. The goal of the study was to identify Title I schoolwide program schools with comparable demographic characteristics in school districts that were interested in participating in the study across varied geographic regions.

School selection procedures began with each participating Regional Educational Laboratory contacting one or more of the school districts within its region that have schools implementing Title I schoolwide programs and are interested in serving as study sites. The LSS sample, however, includes districts and schools outside of its region.

Through the collaborating regional educational laboratories, the Laboratory for Student Success received detailed information on each elementary and middle school in the district from school districts that agreed to participate in the study. The core database used to determine site selection included the school-by-school data on achievement test scores, percent of students qualified for free and reduced-price lunch, enrollment, racial characteristics, and level of the schools.

For a given school district, more effective and less effective schools were identified based on the data submitted by the participating school districts using statistical modeling of the expected academic performance of the schools, controlling for the income level (data on free and reduced-price lunch). The final selection of the sample schools was determined with input from the school district and school staff. Table 1 provides a summary of the demographics of the sample schools participating in the study.

Instrumentation

In addition to using the demographic and achievement data routinely collected by the school/district, the study collected additional data using multiple methods, including observation of classroom practice, interviews with school staff, and surveys of school staff and parents.

Classroom Practice: Observations of classroom practices focused on instructional strategies, settings in which instruction took place, types of interactions between students and teachers, and students

learning behaviors and interactions with peers. Classroom observations were carried out during reading and math periods.

Interviews with the school staff: Open-ended questions were used by the research team in their interviews with principals, teachers, parent focus groups from the participating schools, and with Title I coordinators at the district level. Questions included in the interviews were designed to connect school practices in the context of the legislative expectations set forth in the Title I schoolwide provisions of the IASA. The types of questions included, for example:

- Resource allocation: How do schools allocate federal, state, and local resources differently as a result of schoolwide programs?
- Teacher recruitment and professional development: How creative are schools in recruiting teachers? Do they engage in new kinds of professional development?
- Inclusion practices: Do schools move to eliminate pull-out practices? Or do they maintain pull-out practices for different categories of students?
- Curriculum design: How do schools decide on curricular materials?

Surveys: The surveys were designed to obtain information on the level of implementation of Title I legislative expectations and school climate. The teacher and principal surveys focused on legislative expectations and school climate/governance components, while the parent survey focused on school climate and parent involvement. A 5-point Likert scale was used ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" responses. The scales were developed based on both rational analysis of the legislative expectations and empirical factor analysis. The mean inter-item reliabilities of the scales was 0.80. See the appendix for more details on the data collection instruments.

Data Collection

During the 1997-98 academic year, researchers from the collaborating Regional Educational Laboratories gathered data from 33 schools in 9 urban districts and 4 countywide districts. Seventeen were identified as more effective schools and 16 were identified as less effective schools. The cross-lab study team collected surveys from 597 teachers, 22 principals, and 692 parents. Classroom observations were conducted on 149 teachers and 882 students. Interviews were conducted with 30 principals, 183 teachers, 11 parent focus groups, and 17 Title I district coordinators.

Table 1
Demographics of Participating School Districts

RELs	Districts	Attendance	Enrollment	Poverty	Af-Am	Latino
AEL	Buckingham	75.5	2,229	51.2	50.0	0.0
	Franklin	73.9	6,831	28.0	14.0	0.0
	Russell	74.1	4,616	41.1	1.0	0.0
	Lee	69.7	4,161	62.6	0.2	0.2
LSS	Denver	93.5	57,340*	73.4	21.1	51.3
	Montgomery County, MD	91.4	123,770	22.5	18.8	11.6
	Philadelphia	82.5	325,663	82.4	66.3	8.5
	Trenton	92.3	11,870*	74.1	70.6	20.0
NCREL	Chicago**	92.6	392,812*	86.0	53.8	32.2
	Cleveland	87.5	71,148*	79.5	70.6	7.5
	Detroit	92.3	181,812*	65.3	90.8	
NWREL	Tacoma*	94.7	28,689*	53.6	19.6	5.1
SERVE	Atlanta	91.3	56,406*	64.2	89.8	2.0

*** Size from School District Database: National Center on Educational Statistics (NCES).**
**** Data for these schools are based on elementary- and middle-school students only**

Findings from Preliminary Analysis of Year 1 Data

1. Some Title I Schoolwide Schools Show Higher Performance

Our sample of Title I schoolwide programs can be classified into "more effective" and "less effective schools," based on our statistical analysis of their student achievement while controlling for poverty factors. Figure 1 presents a graphic summary of the achievement differences between the two types of schools in each of our selected districts. When placed along the same continuum of student achievement, the more effective schools are all above the benchmarking line, while the less effective schools are all below the line (see Figure 1). The classification draws from our analysis of a database that included the school-by-school data on achievement test scores, percent of students qualified for free and reduced price lunch, enrollment, racial characteristics, and grade-levels of the schools. It should be noted that districts used different tests and the information they provided varied from 2 to 7 years. More specifically, the following tests were used: Iowa Test of Basic Skills in Atlanta, Chicago, and Denver; California Achievement Test in Cleveland; Michigan Assessment Test in Detroit; Texas Assessment of Basic Skills in Houston; New Jersey Early Warning Test in Trenton; Philadelphia Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills in Philadelphia; and Virginia School Assessment Program in all Virginia's school districts. During the 1997-98 academic year, lab researchers gathered data from 33 schools in 9 urban districts and 4 countywide districts. To identify What Works, we created two samples of schools, using our statistical model of expected academic performance, given their income characteristics.

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Figure 1: Standardized Average Residual Scores of Exceptional Title I Schools

Further, more effective and less effective Title I schoolwide program schools in the sample are very similar in terms of socioeconomic characteristics. As Table 2 shows, small variations were observed in racial composition of the student population, teacher turnover rates, and the level of concentrated poverty, but none were statistically significant. More effective Title I schoolwide programs across the geographically dispersed study sites showed a greater mean achievement level than expected given the schools' socioeconomic characteristics. This finding suggests a greater capacity of the more effective schoolwide program schools to achieve student success in spite of the odds.

Table 2
School and Student Characteristics of
More Effective and Less Effective Schools

Characteristics	Less Effective		More Effective	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students				
Average attendance	92.73	2.27	91.04	5.12
% African-American	62.86	39.94	47.42	39.81
% Latino	23.90	33.76	33.70	37.31
% free/reduced-price lunch	87.05	10.42	82.55	14.59
Schools				
Enrollment	552.00	145.24	536.00	213.15

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2. District Policy shifts from Compliance-oriented to Standard-based Accountability

Title I schoolwide programs no longer simply follow a compliance model that has traditionally been driven by complex federal regulations. Instead, schoolwide programs are more integrated with the district-wide vision of educational accountability. Regardless of their regional location and income and racial characteristics, the sampled schools are all affected by accountability standards established by the district and the state. Schoolwide programs are no longer at the margin of system-wide reform.

Interview data in our sampled districts and Title I schoolwide programs suggest a substantial awareness of the legislative expectations as established in the IASA. Regardless of whether the schoolwide programs are more or less effective, interviewees frequently mentioned the importance of schoolwide goals, standard-based accountability, instructional improvement, and the need for higher quality in professional development. Table 3 shows the frequency with which the four categories of interviewees mentioned the legislative expectations. Table 3 suggests that the interviewees understand shared school visions and goals, in particular student performance goals. Also, participants emphasized the importance of instructional strategies, such as increased learning time, assistance for students in need, and inclusion practices. The emphasis on standards-based accountability is clearly reinforced by districtwide policy initiatives, which we will now turn to.

Table 3
Frequencies of Legislative Expectations Mentioned by Interviewees: Comparison Between Less Effective and More Effective Schools

	Principals		Teachers		Parent Groups	
	Less	More	Less	More	Less	More
School Visions/Goals	6	12	47	62	2	6
Standards	6	9	18	22	4	2
Instructional Strategies	20	25	119	175	6	7
Accountability	0	4	5	13	2	1
Collaboration	4	9	40	51	0	1
Assessment	4	3	34	44	1	0
Professional Development	4	6	28	33	0	1
Parent Involvement	13	17	17	27	7	17

Our study found that several districts in the sample have put in place strategies that facilitate scaling-up efforts for schoolwide reform. Districtwide initiatives are paying increasing attention to low-performing schools, many of which are implementing Title I schoolwide programs. In the nine districts

we studied, district reform agenda include creating a general emphasis on accountability and providing guidelines for resource allocation and professional development. For example:

- Chicago uses probation and reconstitution policies to enforce accountability for improvement by poorly performing schools. The two less effective schools in the study sample in Chicago are now under probation.

- In Atlanta, one less effective school is being reconstituted with new staff and a new principal during 1997-98.

- A student promotion and detention policy is being implemented in Tacoma, Trenton, and Chicago.

- Philadelphia's Children Achieving reforms create a Teaching and Learning Network and utilize equity coordinator positions that customize professional development.

- In response to the district's Success for Every Student initiatives, teachers in schoolwide programs in Montgomery County (Maryland) prepare students to pass their tests in spring.

- The establishment of content and performance standards in Tacoma was shaped by reform in the state of Washington. The Essential Learnings were set in 1997. Benchmarks for reading, writing, mathematics and communication occur in grades 4, 7, and 10. State assessments are aligned with the Essential Learnings.

Districts also provide support to the Title I schoolwide schools, particularly those that have lagged behind in academic performance. Many districts' reform agendas include creating a general climate of accountability and provide guidelines and standards for resource allocation and professional development. For example, Tacoma has a district-wide literacy program. In Chicago, schools under probation receive additional local resources to recruit external partners to address their needs. Philadelphia's Teaching and Learning Network and Instructional Support Team are examples of the kinds of implementation supports provided by the district.

A major focus of the research is on the impact of district policy and district-based curriculum and performance standards on the implementation of Title I schoolwide programs. In particular, we are interested in investigating how the district-level initiatives have affected resource allocation, professional development, curricular design, and instructional practices and curricular organization of the Title I schoolwide programs. The following are case illustrations of findings from a preliminary analysis of the interview data from four of our sample districts, namely, Philadelphia, Montgomery County (MD), Chicago, and Tacoma (WA) using the NUD•IST program (a data management program that assists in the sorting and classification of qualitative data).

Philadelphia, PA

In determining the impact of the Philadelphia public schools' reform agenda on the implementation of Title I schoolwide programs in that city, our analysis focused on the connection between the district's "Children Achieving" reform initiative and implementation of Title I schoolwide programs in the participating sample schools. Under the leadership of Superintendent David W. Hornbeck, the Children Achieving initiative is focused on ensuring that Philadelphia children can perform at high levels so they can enter the 21st century with confidence about their future. The plan spells out the steps the district needs to take over the next four and one-half years and is based on a ten-part framework, described below. The Children Achieving initiative is comprehensive in scope, ranging from setting new high standards for students so they can compete in our global economy, to creating the

additional time teachers need to prepare students to meet those standards. It has involved the implementation of full-day kindergarten, reductions in class size, and the reorganization of the entire structure of the School District into clusters of schools, and the division of large schools into Small Learning Communities (SLC).

In the ten-part reform framework for Children Achieving, each of the ten components contains a statement of vision and rationale, specific strategies describing how to achieve this vision, and a time-line identifying significant steps in this process:

1. Set high expectations for everyone.
2. Design accurate performance indicators to hold everyone for results.
3. Shrink the centralized bureaucracy and let schools make more decisions.
4. Provide intensive and sustained professional development to all staff.
5. Make sure that all students are ready for school.
6. Provide students with the community supports and services they need to succeed in school.
7. Provide up-to-date technology and instructional materials.
8. Engage the public in shaping, understanding, supporting and participating in school reform.
9. Ensure adequate resources and use them effectively.
10. Be prepared to address all of these priorities together and for the long term–starting now.

Small Learning Communities (SLC) are also a significant strategy of the reform initiative. The district has broken up large schools into smaller subgroups, in an effort to ensure students, teachers, and parents become part of a small, more closely-knit community. Most are formed around a particular theme, such as cultural diversity. Each Small Learning Community serves between 200 and 500 students. Students are grouped heterogeneously instead of being tracked by ability level, and all students are expected to meet rigorous standards. The district holds the Small Learning Communities accountable for student achievement and each SLC has decision-making authority commensurate with how well its students are performing. The district also seeks to connect the Small Learning Communities closely with parents and with community resources and services.

Our data indicate that by the second year of the Children Achieving initiative, schools and clusters were beginning to integrate the district reform initiative into their existing Title I schoolwide programs. Following an initial period political conflict and policy confusion, educators began to accommodate and adapt the reforms to the cluster, school, and classroom levels.

Highlights of the ways the Children Achieving initiative is strengthening the professional capacity of the Title I schoolwide programs in Philadelphia are discussed below.

District restructuring: Cluster services for schoolwide programs. Administrators created a created Teaching and Learning Network (TLN), an initiative to provide training and other support to teachers and principals at the cluster level. The network is composed of coordinators-one for each cluster, six to eight "facilitators," and an equity coordinator. The equity coordinator tracks Title I programs, desegregation efforts, special education efforts, and ESL programs, and keeps schools informed of a broad array of equity issues. During the initial implementation period, at the cluster level the TLN coordinators, facilitators, and equity coordinators continued to define their roles and establish their relationships with the schools. In each of the four study sites, the TLN was actively organizing new types of professional development activities for teachers both at the cluster offices and at the schools.

There was considerable variation as to how frequently the TLN staff visited the schools. By the second year of the reform initiative, all four clusters and their respective schools had established

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schedules of when, where, and what type of professional development support services the TLN would provide to teachers. Further, the equity coordinators worked with the TLN to customize professional development to meet the needs of schools with high proportions of at-risk students. In each site, a system of support was clearly emerging.

School restructuring: Small learning communities and school councils. By the second reform year, nearly every cluster leader and teacher in the schools we visited had positive things to say about the concept of breaking up large schools into smaller learning communities. The Small Learning Communities (SLCs) were frequently mentioned by teachers as one of the most positive aspects of the Children Achieving agenda. After a year of working in the small communities, several teachers said it gave them more time to plan with other teachers, time that was not previously built into their schedule for this purpose. Teachers were also able to share instructional strategies with each other during this new planning time. In Title I schoolwide sites, SLCs facilitated the instruction of students in heterogeneous groups rather than tracking them by ability level. In turn, Title I funds and program staff helped facilitate the development of SLCs.

While the Small Learning Community concept meshed well with the goals of the Title I schoolwide programs, because both focus on holding all students to high standards of performance, and integrating them into a single "learning community" with a common curriculum, the district's School Council initiative has not blended as successfully with these goals. Each of the four schoolwide sites reported having had difficulty establishing the school councils and securing the necessary parent vote of support to be officially approved by the district. Often times, schools already had existing governing bodies and saw the new council as superfluous. It remains to be seen whether they will have a positive impact on the operation of schoolwide programs.

Classroom Level: Academic standards and assessment. While the clusters and SLCs change represented a new form of organizational structures, both at the district and school level, the new standards and assessments introduced under "Children Achieving" blended very well with the goals of the Title I schoolwide programs at the classroom and instructional level. In many cases, Title I funding has helped provide professional development time for teachers to learn how to design and prepare for tests required under the Children Achieving Initiative, and the new TLN support services provided by the cluster initiative has given teachers the assistance necessary to improve their day-to-day teaching. Equity coordinators and teachers were able to set aside time to review the pace of students' academic progress at the schoolwide sites. In short, there were positive intersections between Children Achieving and Title I that seemed to directly impact and improve education for at-risk students at the classroom level.

Conclusion. Our study of the Children Achieving reform in four Title I schoolwide sites suggests a pattern of implementation that is common to other educational reform: a period of initial conflict and confusion, followed by a gradual adaptation and accommodation of the reforms to the school settings. There is a close match between the legislative expectations for Title I schoolwide programs and the Children Achieving agenda. This match has greatly facilitated the interface of Title I schoolwide implementation and district-based reforms. Our preliminary findings suggest that teachers expressed satisfaction with the changes at the classroom instructional level toward the end of the second reform year.

Montgomery County, MD

The implementation of Title I schoolwide programs in the Montgomery County, Maryland public schools provides another illustration of the significant role of district-wide reform initiatives. While Montgomery County is a relatively affluent suburb, its demographics are changing, posing

challenges similar to those in urban school districts. Among these challenges are the fact that the student population is increasingly diverse, including a growing number of students from minority and low-income backgrounds, and the county teaching staff is not fully prepared to meet their needs. These professional-development concerns, coupled with fiscal limitations have also raised concerns about the district's capacity to support the program implementation needs of the school staff. Fifty eight schools in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are eligible to receive federal Title I funds. Three of these are operating schoolwide programs because 50% or more of their students are low-income students.

In response to these challenges, the MCPS adopted a reform initiative know as "Success for Every Student" (SES) in 1992. The initiative employs broad system-wide strategies to raise student achievement. It specifies various tasks for schools, central administrative offices, parents, and communities, to achieve four goals: (a) ensure academic success for every student; (b) provide an effective instructional program; (c) strengthen partnerships for education; and (d) create a "self-renewing" organization with a positive work climate in which staff effectiveness and creativity are encouraged, respected, valued, and supported to promote productivity and ownership for student success, with the instructional program including efficient and effective support and staff development.

In Montgomery County, the central question of our research was what impact the MCPS reform initiative was having on the quality of instruction and curriculum in schools operating schoolwide programs. Our preliminary analysis of data collected from two of the three schoolwide programs in Montgomery County suggests that the district initiative raised two schools' expectations about student performance, (a similar finding observed in Philadelphia). Teachers said the entire staff's effort is necessary to ensure that students pass the Maryland statewide test. Our classroom observations also suggest that a fair amount of time was devoted to preparing students for meeting the accountability standards, as measured by the district-wide reading and math tests.

While all three schoolwide programs had a strong focus on student performance, the programs adopted different instructional strategies. At one school, teachers relied heavily on test data to group students by their level of performance, regrouping them as they progressed. In another, teachers used aides to assist small groups of students needing extra attention within the regular classroom setting. Further, one school focused on developing students' writing skills across all academic subjects. As a fifth-grade math teacher pointed out, "Students have their entries every day and whatever they answer has to be in complete sentences. We have a little symbol that says 'sentences please.' We try to have them write more and use complete sentences."

Overall, schoolwide programs in MCPS seemed to benefit from a district that is fiscally sound with a vision of educational accountability focused on success for every student. In terms of student achievement, one of the schools showed particularly strong performance in math at both the third and the fifth grades. Given the district's relatively sound resource base, it is not surprising to see extensive professional development activity, organized parental involvement, and, perhaps most importantly, teacher collegiality.

Chicago, IL

Since 1996, the Chicago school board has intervened directly in the district's lowest performing schools, employing a variety of strategies to raise student achievement. For example, the school board places schools on probation if more than 15% of students scored at or below the national norm in math and reading, but also provides additional resources to help the schools improve. The district also terminated social promotion (the practice of promoting, rather than holding back, students who are not

ready for the next grade) and required students to meet basic standards on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Students who fail the test in the spring are required to attend summer school and retake the test in August.

In addition, the district developed the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS) and Curriculum Framework Statements (CFS). The standards and frameworks define "what students should know and be able to do" in four core curriculum areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. All students, including special needs students and those with limited English proficiency, are expected to meet these standards. Teachers are expected to adjust instructional materials to meet the needs of all their students.

Given Chicago's nationally-known focus on educational accountability, there is an increased focus on improving student test scores in all the schoolwide programs throughout the district. Teachers now pay more serious attention to test preparation, particularly in the few weeks prior to the administration of ITBS in the Spring because of the new high-stakes consequences. They use test preparation materials distributed by the district or state, and also attend district-sponsored workshops on test-taking skills. Teachers and students are also tending more often to adopt instructional strategies focused on basic skills, because they believe this will help students do well on their tests.

Tacoma, WA

In 1997, the State of Washington established the "Essential Learnings," a set of content and performance standards. The state set benchmarks in four areas—reading, writing, mathematics and communications—in grades 4, 7, and 10; benchmarks for science, social studies, arts and health and fitness are set at grades 4 and 5 and grades 7 and 8. The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) is a state test that is aligned with "Essential Learnings."

Despite the state's efforts to publicize the new standards, both school staff and parents appear more focused on the district's policy to end social promotion, rather than school performance on state tests. A majority of teacher responses on our survey supported a strict district-wide policy on promotion, but a number of teachers at the two schools we visited expressed concern that students who fail will not get the assistance they need. Also, principals and district administrators in these two schools expressed concern about the possibility of their students earning low student scores on the Essential Learning Assessments. This concern is well founded, since meeting state performance standards will pose a tremendous challenge for these two schools; they are currently on probation for being low-scoring schools. As of the fall of 1997, the district had not yet announced a plan to address the needs of students who fail to meet district and state standards. In spring of 1997, district Title I administrators reported that the district was considering instituting a summer school requirement for low-scoring students. Principals were still waiting for guidelines from the district about summer school.

The district also sought to reduce the student-to-adult ratio in the classroom, and, in most cases, eliminating "pullouts" for low-income students and special-needs students. Staff at both schools reported using the "in-class" method under the Targeted Assistance School (TAS) model. One example of how this method is used in Tacoma is an ESL aide who provides in-class English instruction in one school, while a learning specialist provided in-class assistance to students with learning disabilities. To address the individual needs of low achieving students, teachers, and learning specialists at all Tacoma schools work together to create Individual Acceleration Plans (IAP). Parents are invited to join teachers in the IAP evaluations, which take place at school three times a year.

Tacoma's central office plays a major role in decision-making about curriculum and grade level benchmarks. In 1995, the district adopted a Houghton Mifflin literacy program to be used districtwide.

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The program drives literacy instruction at both schools. Those teachers who mentioned the program said they were satisfied with the curriculum and found that it provides consistency in instruction and assessment across different grade levels.

Conclusion

In short, the four districts have developed aspects of what we call an "academic accountability framework." These aspects of accountability include: defining academic standards that apply to all schools, including Title I schoolwide programs; creating district-wide tests that may be used to determine whether students are promoted; raising expectations on the school's capacity to improve performance.

Clearly, district-directed standards are likely to have important implications for inner-city schools with large concentrations of disadvantaged students. But district-initiated pressure is not likely to improve student performance in lower-performing schools if the districts does not provide additional resources and professional support. As urban districts raise the accountability standards, there is clearly a need to maintain an infrastructure of support for schoolwide programs. In light of these concerns, in the next section we will propose ways in which the federal government can more actively engage in creating the necessary systemic conditions to support teaching and learning in schoolwide programs.

3. Federal Title I Policy: Different Views between Effective and Less Effective Schools

Teachers in the more effective schoolwide programs, when compared to their peers in the less effective settings, tend to have a sharper focus on academic accountability and agree that there has been an increase in practices associated with holding students and schools accountable for their performance. Teachers in the more effective schools consistently showed a stronger degree of agreement with each other about accountability issues in their schools. For example, as Table 3A shows, 42% of the teachers in the 17 more effective schools agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that there has been "an increase in students' standardized test scores" since their school adopted a schoolwide program; only 32% of teachers in the 16 less effective schools agreed. Fifty-five percent of the teachers in the more effective schools suggested that their school's performance has been clearly documented. There were also slightly more teachers in the more effective schools who agreed that "federal and state monitoring practices" primarily focused on schooling quality (45% in the more effective schools versus 42% in the less effective schools). Descriptive statistics in the teachers' responses between the effective and less effective schools are also shown in Table 3A.

Table 3A
Teacher Responses to the Implementation of Federal Title I Policy, 1998

	More Effective (%)	Less Effective (%)	Difference (%) Btw. More and Less Accountability
Question 5	N=341	N=241	
Since my school began implementing a Title I Schoolwide project, I have noticed an increase in students' standardized test scores.			
Disagree	11.1 (341)	15.7	
Uncertain	46.9	52.3	
Agree	42.0	32.0	10.0
Question 35	N=343	N=235	
The progress or lack of progress my school has made toward Title I goals is clearly documented.			
Disagree	3.2	3.8	
Uncertain	42.0	48.1	
Agree	54.8	48.1	6.7
Question 41	N=339	N=239	
Federal and state monitoring practices focus primarily on the educational quality of my school.			
Disagree	8.6	8.0	
Uncertain	46.6	50.6	
Agree	44.9	41.4	3.5
Resources/Teaching Conditions			
Question 18	N=344	N=239	
Title I funding has helped reduce class size in the school.			
Disagree	34.0	36.9	
Uncertain	30.8	22.6	
Agree	35.2	40.6	-5.4
Question 28	N=335	N=240	
I have taken advantage of resources available at federal technical assistance centers.			
Disagree	38.0	42.5	
Uncertain	36.7	25.4	
Agree	25.4	32.1	-6.7
Question 29	N=334	N=237	
The federal technical assistance centers provide useful resources for my school.			
Disagree	15.3	20.6	
Uncertain	63.5	54.4	
Agree	21.3	24.9	-3.6
Question 30	N=339	N=233	
Federal resources have facilitated the increased capacity of my school to meet its needs in flexible and creative ways.			
Disagree	14.1	16.7	
Uncertain	44.8	39.5	
Agree	41.0	43.7	-2.7
Decision-making in Title I Program			
Question 31	N=340	N=238	
Teachers have significant input in decisions about the use of federal resources at my school.			
Disagree	30.6	28.2	
Uncertain	35.6	31.1	
Agree	33.8	40.8	-7.0
Question 42	N=341	N=244	
My school effectively involves parents in the planning and improvement of Title I supported activities.			
Disagree	14.9	15.2	
Uncertain	25.8	25.8	
Agree	59.2	59.0	0.2

The principals' views about Title I accountability were generally consistent with the teachers' responses. We were able to interview 11 principals of the more effective schools and 11 principals of the less effective schools. While 7 of the 11 principals in the more effective schools "noticed an increase in students' standardized test scores" following schoolwide implementation, 6 of the 11 principals in less effective schools agreed with the statement. All of the 11 principals in more effective schools agreed or strongly agreed that their school performance has been clearly documented, compared to 9 of the 11 principals in the less effective schools. Documentation is an important dimension of accountability, because keeping records of student performance in one way a school can show it is paying attention to student performance.

With regard to how federal Title I resources have affected teaching conditions, teachers' responses differed slightly between the two types of schools. In the more effective schools, fewer teachers reported that Title I funds were used to reduce class size. Only 1 out of 4 teachers in more effective schools mentioned that they made use of the resources at the federal Title I technical assistance centers, while only 1 out of 5 of them rated the technical assistance centers as providing useful resources for their school. Principals, too, seemed to have some reservations about the technical assistance centers. Only 4 of the 11 principals in both the more effective and the less effective schools mentioned that they "have taken advantage of resources available" at the technical centers. Interestingly, more than 40% of the teachers in both effective and less effective schools reported that federal resources facilitated flexibility and creativity to meet the educational needs. At least 6 of the 11 principals in both types of schools also valued the flexibility and creativity that federal resources afforded them. In other words, schoolwide programs have allowed for variation in local instructional practices.

According to the teacher surveys, only 33% of the teachers in more effective schools felt that they exercised "significant input in decisions about the use of federal resources" at their school. (See Table 3) This is lower than the 41% in the less effective schools. In contrast, a clear majority of teachers in both types of schools reported that the school effectively involved parents in the "planning and improvement of Title I supported activities" in their schools, as suggested in Table 3A. Not surprisingly, teachers felt that their decision-making power is not as extensive as the parents'. Consistent with the teachers' view, virtually all the principals reported effective parental involvement in the planning and improvement of Title I-supported activities in their schools.

4. The More Effective Title I Schoolwide Programs are More Likely to Meet the IASA Legislative Expectations

Having considered how effective and less effective schools differed in their views of federal Title I policy, we now broaden the discussion to include the major components of the legislative expectations as adopted in the 1994 IASA. When compared to their less effective counterparts, the more effective schools are more likely to meet a wide range of IASA legislative expectations.

A major focus of this study is to examine the level of implementation of Title I schoolwide legislative expectations as established in the IASA. These legislative expectations are outlined in a booklet entitled, "An Overview of Title I schoolwide Programs: Federal Legislative Expectations" (Wong and Meyer 1998), produced by the Laboratory for Student Success. Drawing on the key components of the schoolwide initiative as laid out in earlier drafts of the booklet, staff at the Laboratory for Student Success developed specific measures in various areas, including schoolwide vision, organizational climate, instructional strategies, and curriculum standards.

More specifically, to measure the level of Title I legislative expectations as implemented in our study sites, the research team created scaled indicators in the teacher survey instrument. For each of the

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scales, we developed various indicators for measuring the level of implementation. A complete scale dictionary for teachers' response to our survey is included in the appendix. For each of the scales, we will highlight those items that are more likely to be implemented in the more effective schools, according to teacher responses to the survey. The mean score differences on a five-point scale are included in parentheses.

In the teacher survey, we include the following scale items regarding "legislative expectations":

Student Performance Goals (14 items: 0.24):

- My school has clearly articulated performance goals for all students for reading and math (0.32).
- Staff at my school selects programs based on student needs (0.30).
- Students who have difficulty mastering state standards are provided with appropriate assistance (0.31).
- Goals and priorities for the school are clear (0.33).

Assessment (4 items: 0.23):

- I refer to the state content and performance standards when assessing student performance (0.20).
- My school uses well-defined procedures to identify students who have difficulty mastering state standards (0.41).

Evaluation (5 items: 0.18):

- Completed homework is reviewed and discussed in class (0.20).
- Completed homework is returned to students with corrections (0.28).

Enriched Curriculum (6 items: 0.27):

- The curricula in my school are consistent with state assessment standards (0.22).
- The instructional strategies at my school are consistent with state and local improvement plans (0.33).

Student-Centered Instruction (5 items: 0.16):

- This classroom has a variety of alternative prescriptive materials available (0.22).
- In this class, students work with materials that are suited to their own needs (0.10).

Cooperative Learning Instruction (4 items: 0.12):

- The students in this class work cooperatively to achieve goals (0.13).
- Some of the materials encourage work with partners or small groups (0.13).

Professional Development (6 items: 0.19):

- In general, teachers at my school are highly qualified (0.30).
- In general, teachers at my school are continually learning and seeking new ideas from each other (0.20).
- The principal actively pursues professional development activities for administrators (0.29).

Resources (8 items: 0.09):

- In general, teachers make effective use of classroom resources (0.30).
- Video equipment, tapes, and films are readily available and accessible (0.11).

Accountability (6 items: 0.13):

- The programs at my school are evaluated by the state (0.32).
- We use the information from state evaluations to guide our instructional decisions (0.22).
- My school makes information about student performance available to families and the community (0.17).

Parent Involvement (10 items: 0.10):
- In general, for students who have not met state standards, teacher-parent conferences are held to determine corrective action (0.19).
- I receive a great deal of support from parents for the work I do (0.19).
- Parents understand what is expected of their children and what they can do to support their education (0.10).
- Teachers keep parents well-informed about the academic performance of their children (0.15).

In the teacher survey, we included the following scales regarding "school climate/governance":

Teacher/Student Relationships (4 items: 0.20):
- Teachers make students feel important (0.19).
- Students get along well with teachers (0.23).

Colleague Relationships (5 items: 0.25):
- I feel accepted by other teachers (0.28).
- Teachers are keen to learn from their colleagues (0.24).
- I receive encouragement from colleagues (0.29).

Shared Decision-Making (3 items: 0.04):
- Teachers are frequently asked to participate in decisions concerning administrative policies and procedures (0.14).

Principal Leadership (5 items: 0.22):
- The principal talks with teachers frequently about their instructional practices (0.32).
- The principal motivates teachers to work in their full capacity (0.24).

School Problems (13 items: 0.20):
- "Fewer" conflict between teachers and administrators (0.26).
- "Fewer" student discipline (0.37).
- "Fewer" teacher turnover (0.58).
- "Fewer" physical conflicts among students (0.29).

Student Attitudes (6 items: 0.25):
- Students show pride and responsibility toward the school (0.25).
- Students respect each other (0.39).

Based on our analysis of teacher response to the 16 sets of indicators, we found significant variation between the two types of school settings. Overall, the more effective schools, when compared to the less effective schools, are more likely to implement the legislative or procedural expectations of the 1994 IASA.

Our statistical analysis of teacher survey data further supports the finding that the more effective schools are more likely to adopt the IASA legislative expectations. Table 4 shows the means and

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standard deviations with the results of Anovas for the teacher survey scales on Title I schoolwide legislative expectations and school climate/governance. As summarized in Table 4, teachers rated all the implementation component and school climate scales above the mean (range 1 to 5; mean 3). Highest rated are instructional strategies with cooperative learning emphasis and student/teacher relationships. Lowest rated are shared decision making and school problems. The results suggest that more effective compared to less effective schoolwide programs show stronger components in their implementation of student performance goals, academic standards and assessments, enriched curriculum, student-centered instruction, cooperative learning strategies, evaluation, availability and usefulness of professional development, accountability, and parent involvement. Also, teachers from more effective schools rate teacher-student relationships, colleague relationships, principal leadership, low school problems, and student attitudes toward schooling significantly higher than teachers from less effective schools. The two groups do not differ statistically significantly in resource allocation and availability and shared decision making components. These results indicate that more effective schools are implementing the IASA legislative expectations at a higher level and also have more positive school climate/governance than less effective schools.

Table 4
Level of Implementation of Legislative Expectations and School Climate/Governance: Comparison Between Less Effective and More Effective Schools (Teacher Surveys)

	Less Effective		More Effective		Anova
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F
Legislative Expectations					
Student performance goals	3.78	.56	4.02	.54	25.06***
Standards/Assessment	3.65	.77	3.89	.71	13.71**
Evaluation	3.99	.60	4.18	.52	14.14**
Enriched curriculum	3.57	.68	3.85	.68	22.28***
Student-centered instruction	3.87	.61	4.04	.57	10.85***
Cooperative learning instruction	4.11	.58	4.22	.56	5.27*
Professional development	3.74	.70	3.92	.72	9.35**
Resources	3.25	.63	3.34	.61	2.70
Accountability	3.64	.57	3.76	.55	6.87**
Parent involvement	3.77	.56	3.87	.58	4.15*
School Climate/Governance					
Teacher/Student relationships 4.13		.54	4.33	.51	20.15***
Colleague relationships	3.85	.73	4.10	.60	19.22***
Shared decision making	3.10	.97	3.13	.97	0.18
Principal leadership	3.70	.92	3.92	.80	9.37**
Low school problems	3.07	.51	3.26	.50	18.88***
Student attitude	3.71	.65	3.96	.62	20.96***

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .0001$

PARENT RESPONSE

To measure parental perception on the level of implementing Title I legislative expectations in the schools that their children attended, the research team created scaled indicators in the parent survey instrument. These scales are similar to the those in the teacher survey. For each of the scales, we developed various indicators for measuring the level of implementation. A complete scale dictionary for parents' response to our survey is included in the appendix. For each of the scales, we will highlight those items that are more likely to be implemented in the more effective schools, according to parents' responses to the survey. The mean score differences on a five-point scale are included in parentheses.

In the parent survey, we include the following scale items regarding "legislative expectations":

Student Performance Goals (5 items: 0.11)

- Parents share the same beliefs and values about what the central mission of the school should be (0.24).
- The standards set by the school are realistic (0.11).

Resources (2 items: 0.18):

- Facilities are "adequate" (0.26).
- The supply of equipment and resources is "adequate" (0.10).

Parent Involvement (8 items: 0.07):

- Parents are given advance notice of topics to be discussed at meetings of the Board of Education or community councils (0.15).
- Parents are encouraged to go to school activities (0.14).

In the parent survey, we include the following scale items regarding "School Climate/Governance":

Teacher/Student Relationships (4 items: 0.07):

- Students get along well with teachers (0.14).
- Teachers make students feel important (0.14).

Principal Leadership (3 items: 0.25):

- The principal tries to improve conditions in the school (0.26).
- The principal involves parents in setting school policy (0.35).

School Problems (6 items: 0.22):

- "Fewer" robbery or theft (0.28).
- "Fewer" vandalism of school property (0.22).
- "Fewer" verbal abuse of teachers (0.31).

Student Attitudes/Efficacy (6 items: 0.10):

- Students show pride and responsibility toward the school (0.15).
- Students work hard in class (0.11).
- Students respect each other (0.24).

Student Activities (4 items: 0.07):

- A variety of student activities are made available (0.12).
- The student activities reflect the values and interests of my community (0.13).

Parent Satisfaction (7 items: 0.15):

- I am satisfied overall with the curriculum in this school (0.17).
- I am satisfied overall with the student discipline in this school (0.18).
- I am satisfied overall with the administrators in this school (0.19).

Based on our analysis of parents' response to the 9 sets of indicators, we found significant variation between the two types of school settings. Overall, the more effective schools, when compared to the less effective schools, are more likely to implement the legislative or procedural expectations of the 1994 IASA.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSE

To measure principals' perception on the level of implementing Title I legislative expectations in their schools, the research team created scaled indicators in the principal survey instrument. These scales are similar to those in the teacher survey. For each of the scales, we developed various indicators for measuring the level of implementation. A complete scale dictionary for principals' response to our survey is included in the appendix. For each of the scales, we will highlight those items that are more likely to be implemented in the more effective schools, according to principals' responses to the survey. The mean score differences on a five-point scale are included in parentheses.

In the principal survey, we include the following scale items regarding "legislative expectations":

Student Performance Goals (13 items: 0.07):

- Staff at my school selects programs based on student needs (0.18).
- I am aware of how the performance of students at my school compares to other schools in this state (0.55).
- The programs at my school meet the educational needs of all students (0.73).
- The Title I programming in my school is based on the identified needs of the students (0.32).
- My school places a high priority on learning (0.56).
- The standards set by the school are realistic (0.53).
- Most of the teachers share the same beliefs and values about what the central mission of the school should be (0.34).

Assessment (4 items: 0.10):

- I refer to the state content and performance standards when assessing student performance (0.23).
- My school uses well-defined procedures to identify students who have difficulty mastering state standards (0.10).

Evaluation (5 items: 0.17):

- Completed homework is reviewed and discussed in class (0.26).
- Teachers regularly provide information to students about their performance (0.25).

Enriched Curriculum (6 items: 0.21):

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- The curricula in my school are consistent with state assessment standards (0.33).
- The instructional strategies at my school are consistent with state and local improvement plans (0.68).

Student-Centered Instruction (5 items: 0.08):
- When starting a new unit of instruction, students use lessons suited to their present abilities (0.15).
- In each class, instructional materials are provided that allow for individualization of instruction (0.36).

Cooperative Learning Instruction (4 items: 0.24):
- In this class, students are encouraged to ask other students for help (0.36).
- Some of the materials encourage work with parents or small groups (0.33).

Professional Development (6 items: 0.14):
- In general, teachers at my school are continually learning and seeking new ideas from each other (0.24).
- The principal actively pursues professional development activities for administrators (0.15).

Resources (8 items: 0.11):
- I have taken advantage of resources available at federal technical assistance centers (0.53).
- The federal technical assistance centers provide useful resources for my school (0.52).
- In general, teachers make effective use of classroom resources (0.26).

Accountability (6 items: 0.06):
- My school makes information about student performance available to families and the community (0.41).
- My school receives clear and coherent guidance from the state/district to direct school-level reform (0.43).

Parent Involvement (9 items: 0.27):
- In general, for students who have not met state standards, teacher-parent conferences are held to determine corrective action (0.31).
- Teachers receive a great deal of support from parents for the work they do (0.73).
- Teachers keep parents well-informed about the academic performance of their children (0.51).

In the principal survey, we include the following scale items regarding "School Climate/Governance":

Teacher/Student Relationships (2 items: 0.32):
- Students get along well with teachers (0.32).
- Teachers encourage students to do their best (0.30).

Colleague Relationships (2 items: 0.45):
- Teachers encourage each other (0.67).
- Teachers assist each other frequently in developing teaching strategies (0.24).

Shared Decision-Making (2 items: 0.26):

- Teachers have significant input in decisions about the use of federal resources at my school (0.10).
- I ask teachers to participate in decisions concerning administrative policies and procedures (0.10).

Principal Leadership (5 items: 0.23):

- Staff members know what is expected of them (0.33).
- I try to improve teachers' working conditions (0.48).

School Problems (13 items: 0.02):

- "Fewer" robbery or theft (0.33).
- "Fewer" teacher turnover (0.48).
- "Fewer" vandalism of school property (0.32).

Student Attitudes/Efficacy (5 items: 0.25):

- Students have a sense of belonging (0.40).
- Students work hard in class (0.25).

PRINCIPALS' VIEWS ON PROCEDURAL ACCOUNTABILITY

These differences in the principals' response provide an empirical base for us to consider the extent to which schools meet the legislative expectations as well as the degree to which there exists variations between the more effective and the less effective schools. Table 5 summarizes our findings on the principals' view on "procedural accountability," i.e. the degree of meeting the IASA legislative expectations.

Principals' views can be summarized in terms of 6 patterns of procedural accountability:

Procedural accountability is high with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in 4 areas:

- student performance goals
- assessment
- professional development
- accountability

Procedural accountability is high with extensive variation between effective and less effective schools in 3 areas:

- teacher/student relationships
- colleague relationships
- student efficacy

Procedural accountability is moderate with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in one area:

- evaluation

Procedural accountability is moderate with extensive variation between effective and less effective schools in 3 areas:

- enriched curriculum
- parent involvement
- shared decision-making

Procedural accountability is low with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in 3 areas:

- student-centered instruction
- resources
- school problems

Procedural accountability is low with extensive variation between effective and less effective schools in 2 areas:

- cooperative learning instruction
- principal leadership

These findings suggest a generally positive perception from the principals who responded to our survey on legislative expectations. Of the 16 areas, principals reported low level of implementation in 5 areas. Clearly, these 5 areas have implications for greater coordination and support from federal, state, and district agencies.

Table 5. Principals' Views on Procedural Accountability: Level of Implementing Legislative Expectations and Degree of School Variation

Level of Implementing Legislative Expectations	Degree of Variation Between "More Effective" and "Less Effective" Schools	
	Limited [1]	More Extensive [2]
High [3]	Student Performance Goals Assessment Professional Development Accountability	Teacher/Student Relationships Colleague Relationships Student Efficacy
Moderate [4]	Evaluation	Enriched Curriculum Parent Involvement Shared Decision-making
Low [5]	Student-Centered Instruction Resources School Problems	Cooperative Learning Instruction Principal Leadership

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1. The mean difference between the "more effective" and the "less effective" schools is less than 0.21, the mean for the 16 indicator scales.

2. The mean difference between the "more effective" and the "less effective" schools is greater than 0.21, the mean for the 16 indicator scales.
3. The mean is 4.0 or higher for both "more effective" and "less effective" schools.
4. The mean is 4.0 or higher for only "more effective" schools.
5. The mean is lower than 4.0 for both "more effective" and "less effective" schools.

TEACHERS' VIEWS ON PROCEDURAL ACCOUNTABILITY

When compared to the principals' view, teachers are less positive regarding "procedural accountability." As Table 6 shows, only 2 of the 16 areas are seen as approaching the high level of implementation of legislative expectations. The five patterns of procedural accountability from the teachers' perspective can be summarized as follows:

Table 6. Teachers' Views on Procedural Accountability : Level of Implementing Legislative Expectations and Degree of School Variation

Level of Implementing Legislative Expectations	Degree of Variation Between "More Effective" and "Less Effective" Schools	
	Limited [1]	More Extensive [2]
High [3]	Cooperative Learning Instruction	Teacher/Student Relationships
Moderate [4]		Colleague Relationships Student Performance Goals Evaluation Student-Centered Instruction
Low [5]	Accountability Parent Involvement Resources Shared Decision Making	Enriched Curriculum Student Efficacy Assessment Principal Leadership School Problems Professional Development

1. The mean difference between the "more effective" and the "less effective" schools is less than 0.13, the mean for the 16 indicator scales.
2. The mean difference between the "more effective" and the "less effective" schools is greater than 0.13, the mean for the 16 indicator scales.
3. The mean is 4.0 or higher for both "more effective" and "less effective" schools.
4. The mean is 4.0 or higher for only "more effective" schools.
5. The mean is lower than 4.0 for both "more effective" and "less effective" schools.

Procedural accountability is high with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in 1 area:

- cooperative learning instruction

Procedural accountability is high with extensive variation between effective and less effective schools in 1 area:

- teacher/student relationships

Procedural accountability is moderate with extensive variation between effective and less effective schools in 4 areas:

- colleague relationships
- student performance goals
- evaluation
- student-centered instruction

Procedural accountability is low with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in 4 areas:

- accountability
- parent involvement
- resources
- shared decision making

Procedural accountability is low with extensive variation between effective and less effective schools in 6 areas:

- enriched curriculum
- student efficacy/attitudes
- assessment
- principal leadership
- school problems
- professional development

These findings suggest that teachers are less positive than their principals on implementing the 1994 IASA legislative expectations. In addition, teachers' survey suggests that 11 of the 16 scales involve extensive variation between the more effective and the less schools. Clearly, policy makers need to pay more attention to the 10 issues that teachers identified as having a low level of procedural accountability in their schools.

PARENTS' VIEWS ON PROCEDURAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Similar to the teachers' response, parental views on procedural accountability remain fairly mixed. As Table 7 shows, only 1 of the 9 scales are seen by the parents as involving a high level of implementation. These parental responses can be summarized in terms of four patterns of procedural accountability:

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Table 7. Parents' Views on Procedural Accountability: Level of Implementing Legislative Expectations and Degree of School Variation

Level of Implementing Legislative Expectations	Degree of Variation Between "More Effective" and "Less Effective" Schools	
	Limited [1]	More Extensive [2]
High [3]	Teacher/Student Relationships	
Moderate [4]	Parent Involvement Student Efficacy Student Performance Goals Parent Satisfaction	
Low [5]	Student Activities	Principal Leadership School Problems Resources

1. The mean difference between the "more effective" and the "less effective" schools is less than 0.16, the mean for the 16 indicator scales.
2. The mean difference between the "more effective" and the "less effective" schools is greater than 0.16, the mean for the 16 indicator scales.
3. The mean is 4.0 or higher for both "more effective" and "less effective" schools.
4. The mean is 4.0 or higher for only "more effective" schools.
5. The mean is lower than 4.0 for both "more effective" and "less effective" schools.

Procedural accountability is high with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in 1 area:

- teacher/student relationships

Procedural accountability is moderate with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in 4 areas:

- parent involvement
- student efficacy/attitude
- student performance goals
- parent satisfaction

Procedural accountability is low with limited variation between effective and less effective schools in 1 area:

- student activities

Procedural accountability is low with extensive variation between effective and less effective schools in 3 areas:

- principal leadership
- school problems
- resources

When one considers the views from the principals, teachers, and parents together, these three groups of stakeholders agree that teacher/student relationships is an area with a high level of procedural accountability. At the same time, they also recognize a low level of procedural accountability in principal leadership, resources, and school problems. Particularly interesting are the differences in responses between principals and teachers. On the issues of accountability, professional development, student efficacy/attitudes, and assessment, there seem to be strong disagreement between teachers and principals. Whereas principals identify these four issues as highly implemented, teachers see them as involving a low level of procedural accountability.

Teachers' views on accountability and assessment may reflect the somewhat limited school experience in adopting research-based whole school reform models. As Table 8 shows, of the 17 more effective schools in our sample that we gathered information on reform strategies, only 3 implemented a comprehensive model (Wang and Walberg 1998). Only 1 of the 16 less effective schools adopted a comprehensive reform model. Most of the Title I schoolwide schools in our sample continue to devote to particular aspects of curriculum reform instead of developing a whole school improvement strategy, as suggested in Table 8. This generally limited experience in whole school reform, in other words, is consistent with the teachers' somewhat mixed view on procedural accountability in their schools. The teachers' views on these matters clearly suggest a need for more training in accountability, assessment and instructional strategies as well as greater effort to facilitate whole school reform in Title I schoolwide schools.

Table 8. Implementation of Comprehensive and Curriculum Reform Models

	More Effective Schools	Less Effective Schools
Both Comprehensive And Curriculum Models	3	1
Only Curriculum and Other Models	10	12
None	1	0
Average No. of Reform Programs/Models Per School	3	3

5. There is discretion in resource allocation and curricular focus at the site level

Schoolwide program sites tend to adopt a distinct curricular focus in their implementation. In a higher performing schoolwide school in Montgomery, Maryland, for example, writing was adopted and teachers made every effort to make sure that students practiced writing in math and other non-reading classes. In Cleveland, one schoolwide program school added a science specialist to raise science proficiency performance. In Tacoma, the two schoolwide programs allocated varying portion (0.46% and 3.1%) of their total Title I funds for professional development. In Cleveland, one schoolwide program school focused teacher development on "best practices" while another set aside $20,000 to expand professional development. And in Trenton, the Higher Order Thinking Skills program (H.O.T.S.) was adopted for students in grades 4 to 6 to increase students' ability to think critically and the teachers were trained for the program.

Schoolwide programs are also likely to take advantage of the flexibility by combine federal and local/state revenues. In one Cleveland school, federal and local funds split the cost of a school-based psychologist; in another school, the after-school tutorial was supported by local funds.

6. Whole-class Instruction is Prevailing

Teachers in schoolwide programs have not moved away from whole-class instruction. Overall, teachers spent over 60% of their time using whole-class instruction rather than using such student-focused approaches as providing instruction in small groups or working with individual students. The classroom observation data suggest that students spent about 70% of their time in a whole-class setting (73% in more effective schools and 67% in less effective schools). Students in both types of sample schools were observed to spend over 70% of their time working independently rather than interacting with teachers, peers, and/or classroom aides. Students from more effective schools were more likely to spend more time working independently than those from less effective schools. In the less effective schools, students spent significantly more time interacting with teachers. When students interacted with teachers, over 70% of the time spent was related to instructional or curricular matters. Only 13% of the interaction time was directed at managerial issues.

7. Further Analysis Shows that there is a Need for Increased Efforts to Engage Parents

In general, the interviews with principals and teachers and the focus group interviews with parents suggest that schools understand the importance of parent involvement in various school activities and encourage parents to participate in school activities such as workshops, PTA meetings, and family entertainment nights. However, parents' attendance rates to these occasions are relatively low and schools have not been able to actively include parents for student learning and achievement. Furthermore, parents were not well aware of their roles in Title I schoolwide programs including decision-making. For example, researchers visited schools in Trenton during two parent workshops. The attendance rate was extremely low and the workshops were not tied into student learning.

One noteworthy finding is the difference between parents who are native English-speaking and those who are non-native English-speaking. Findings from analysis of 692 parent surveys from 13 of the sampled schools show that parents who are bilingual or speaking a different language at home, when compared with their native English-speaking peers, were much less satisfied with student performance goals, parent involvement, teacher-student relationships, principal leadership, school problems, and satisfaction toward school. In particular, the perception of non-native English-speaking parents from less effective schools tended to be most dissatisfied with the school climate (see Table 9). In one Tacoma school, for example, where over 32% of the students come from non-English-speaking homes, there were

marked differences in the satisfaction of immigrant and nonimmigrant parents. While English-speaking parents cited numerous occasions in which they had had the opportunity to be involved in school decision-making and social events, the non-English speaking parents did not report being involved in any way beyond participating in teacher-parent conferences and receiving letters from the school (some translated to the native language). It is possible that parents from different cultural backgrounds have higher expectations toward school, and in turn, are more likely to become frustrated when their expectations are not met. They may also be less ready to get involved in school activities in part because of language and cultural barriers. These findings suggest that there is a need for schools with LEP parents to develop strategies to encourage parents to get involved in school activities more often and to feel comfortable visiting school.

Table 9

Level of Implementation of Legislative Expectations and School Climate/Governance: Comparison Between Less Effective and More Effective Schools
(Parent Surveys)

	Language	Less Effective Mean	SD	More Effective Mean	SD	F Statistics Eff	ESOL	Int
		(N=191)		(N=316)				
Legislative Expectations								
Student performance	ESOL	3.87	.80	3.83	.59	.02	9.30**	1.40
	English	4.01	.63	4.12	.51			
Resources	ESOL	3.35	1.06	2.94	1.02	3.12	.24	.87
	English	3.22	1.13	3.12	1.15			
Parent involvement	ESOL	3.83	.79	3.82	.52	.01	6.32*	.35
	English	3.99	.59	4.05	.52			
School Climate/Governance								
T/S relationships	ESOL	3.89	1.00	4.12	.65	3.71	4.83*	1.61
	English	4.14	.67	4.21	.58			
Principal leadership	ESOL	3.45	.96	3.74	.79	8.39**	10.58**	.04
	English	3.70	.78	4.01	67			
School problems	ESOL	2.99	1.08	3.02	1.01	4.04*	10.10**	2.60
	English	3.17	.95	3.49	.65			
Student attitudes	ESOL	3.93	.75	4.07	.54	1.84	.17	.20
	English	3.99	.58	4.08	.46			
Student activities	ESOL	3.59	.93	3.70	.61	1.81	2.93	.40
	English	3.78	.74	3.80	.74			
Satisfaction	ESOL	3.74	.86	3.86	.66	2.85	5.52*	.11
	English	3.93	.78	4.05	.65			

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .0001$
Eff: Main effects of more vs. less effective schools
ESOL: Main effects of English vs ESOL parents
Int: Two way interaction effects of School Effectiveness and Parents Language/Culture

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8. Programmatic Fragmentation Remains at Some Schools

There is a lack of collaboration and communication among classroom teachers and additional staff (Title I coordinators, basic skill teachers, and/or instructional staff). Without proper scheduling and collaboration, the presence of additional staff could cause confusion among teachers and students. Also, lack of staff stability was found to be a barrier to effective program implementation.

Some school districts have additional staff spend a significant portion of their time on paperwork and attending meetings, which decreases the amount of time they engage working with students in need. This barrier also causes fraction between regular teachers and additional staff.

The schools in this study indicate that they emphasize use of technology, including computers, to meet the goals of Project 2000. However, there is a concern among teachers and parents, especially parents about this focus on technology without mastery of basic skills, such as reading and math.

9. There is a Need to Monitor the Extent to which "Within school" Performance Gaps Persist

Although it is clear that schools in the study are moving toward adopting more inclusive practices, there are evidences of programs being used for targeted children and/or targeted grade levels. Equally important is the need to monitor the extent to which "within-school" performance gaps persist among different socioeconomic and racial/ethnic groups. Preliminary data from the sampled schools show that several patterns exist.

10. There is an Ongoing Need to Improve the Quality of Teaching

Schools in this study recognize and emphasize the importance of professional development and many teachers discuss positive experiences in their professional development. However, there appears to be a gap in the content, opportunity, and/or delivery of professional development which address schoolwide implementation.

There is a lack of consistent Title I schoolwide funding to plan and implement the programs. Teachers and principals are concerned about frequent changes, which cause discrepancy between school plan and delivery. Both school personnel and students suffer from the lace of consistency. In short, the quality of teaching must be a central focus in schoolwide improvement.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

The current climate of educational reform in the United States stems in part from growing public concern over the general quality of schooling. There is increasing attention on the need to identify a broad-based range of outcomes and to ensure school accountability for effective instruction and productive learning of all students, including and particularly those who live in circumstances that place them at risk of educational failure or leaving school unprepared for work and/or further learning. Findings on the implementation of schoolwide programs suggest that Title I can be a part of national efforts toward systemic improvement. In this section, we explore the broader implications of findings in the context of Title I reauthorization and comprehensive school reform in the service of student success.

Strengthen the Accountability Functions of the District

Federal legislative expectations for Title I programs have been expanded to include challenging state/district content and performance standards. States and districts are expected to establish content and performance standards for Title I students that reflect the same knowledge, skill, and performance levels that are expected of all children. Title I program services need to also be aligned with the state and district content standards, to ensure accountability for meeting achievement standards by students in Title I programs. The schoolwide program design offers a built-in organizational mechanism through which the Title I legislative expectations can be linked with the ongoing standards-based reform efforts of the school/school district/state.

Further, schoolwide program schools and districts can use the implementation of schoolwide programs and the associated accountability requirements as an opportunity to consider expanding the ways in which evaluation and assessment are used for the entire school. For example, student assessment for Title I accountability purposes can be used to guide instruction and improve the teaching practice of the entire school. Similarly, the use of alternative strategies for assessing student outcomes can be applied schoolwide to increase coordination of programming across units and departments within schools, as well as at the district level.

Schoolwide programs also create a context in which the roles of principals and district staff can be reevaluated. Most schoolwide program schools have spent relatively short periods of time planning before implementation and have received mixed levels of support (as distinct from sanctions) from the district level. Further, there is evidence that schoolwide programs have significantly increased professional development opportunities to address school-specific implementation needs. Districts might use the transition to schoolwide programs as an opportunity to refine their support to schools for more targeted professional development that is responsive to the needs of the school staff, e.g., providing professional development programs on methods for phasing out pull-out programs or for integrating traditional Title I reading and math curricula with that of the whole school.

System-wide Assessment on Student Outcomes in Title I Schools

To create the infrastructure required to sustain the impact of the schoolwide approach to improvement, districts can improve accountability of Title I schoolwide programs by establishing clear guidance and support for measuring, analyzing, and reporting student performance using a districtwide assessment framework based on the district policy on an annual or semiannual basis. Because many intervention strategies in schoolwide programs focus on early literacy, districts should collect student performance information at the beginning and end of the school year as early as the first grade.

Currently, there is unevenness among districts in using standardized measures of student progress in Title I schools. Often, localized assessment is adopted by particular reform models. To fully understand program effectiveness, districts need to find out exactly where Title I schoolwide students stand when compare to their peers in non-Title I schools in the same district or state.

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Build a Knowledge base on Procedural Knowledge

District and school professionals need to collaborate on building a procedural knowledge base on ways to achieve a high degree of program implementation of Title I schoolwide programs in varied settings across the district and state. This lack has contributed to the lack of implementation to date. Procedural knowledge development is a central research and development task necessary for achieving wide-scale application of comprehensive whole-school reform to achieve the national goal of schooling success for every student, including those for whom the current system of delivery has not been effective.

Hold Schools Accountable for School Effects in Raising the Expectation for Schooling Success for Every Student

Educators and policymakers at all levels need to work together to raise the expectations of schoolwide programs for all students school-wide. Districts can design and implement strategic plans aimed at narrowing the learning gap among varying racial/ethnic and income groups within the schoolwide program. In this regard, further research on Title I implementation and outcomes needs to focus on establishing databases on student performance variation within school and across schools within the district/state.

Create Incentives for Schoolwide Programs to Select Professional Development that Meets their Particular Needs

Forging the linkage between research-based knowledge and school practices is an integral part of comprehensive school reform in the service of schooling success for every student. Strategic partnerships between schoolwide schools and R&D organizations (e.g., universities and Regional Educational Laboratories) should be explored. The opportunity to redefine decision-making roles at the school level can facilitate the creation of more inclusive and efficient infrastructures support to better serve the needs of the increasingly diverse student population schools are challenged to serve.

For example, expanded teacher input into school decisions can be combined with efforts to create professional networks that encourage teachers to initiate and sustain schoolwide program approaches that support and cultivate changes at the classroom level. Similarly, schoolwide programs offer opportunities to explore broader governance issues. For example, alternative approaches to the functions of and relationships between the district, school, and classroom can be explored, as well as particular types of parental involvement.

Expand Efforts to Engage Parents

The study shows a general lack of school-parent partnership, even for native English-speaking parents. The challenge to involve parents of LEP students is even greater. Implementation of parental engagement efforts should be an integral part of the whole-school reform, building on the diverse resources and expertise of families and the community in forging working partnerships in the service of student success.

Concluding Remarks

The findings presented in this paper are from a very preliminary examination of the first year's database. Since this is a three-year collaborative project among five Regional Educational Laboratories, data collection is continuing. In future reports, we aim to address additional policy issues, including: Do effective Title I schoolwide schools receive more resources than their less effective counterparts? If not, how do they use their resources differently? To what extent is there within-school variation in student performance among different racial/ethnic and income groups? Do magnet schoolwide programs maintain academic differentiation? How do teachers make use of student assessment to improve instructional practice (rather than test preparation)? And, perhaps most importantly, what are strategies that have been found to be effective in sustaining schoolwide intervention over time and how can we bring this knowledge to bear in efforts to assist schools in bringing schoolwide program approaches to scale?

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Appendix

Research Design and Coordination of Data Collection

To bridge the critical gap between research and policy, the Laboratory for Student Success at Temple University (LSS), the Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory at the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education, initiated a collaborative study on Title I schoolwide programs with four regional laboratories in the summer of 1996. The collaborating labs include Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL), North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), and Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE). This research project is based on a program of study initiated at the National Center on Education in the Inner Cities (see Wong et al., 1997). The cross-lab collaboration has two major goals: develop a national database on the implementation and outcomes of Title I schoolwide programs; and provide assistance to schools, districts, and states in an effort to demonstrate and maintain a high degree of implementation of schoolwide programs that are effective in achieving student success in a variety of school settings across different geographic regions.

This study examines several policy questions regarding the effectiveness of Title I schoolwide programs. First, is there a relationship between the 1994 IASA Title I legislative expectations for higher standards and better student performance? Are higher-performing schools more ready to meet these legislative expectations? How do better-performing schoolwide programs differ from their lower-performing peers? Further, what kinds of instructional strategies are used in better-performing schools? Finally, can we develop a procedural knowledge base on "what works" regarding Title I schoolwide programs? Our efforts to address these issues will have broad policy implications on the 1999 reauthorization of Title I as well as on the ongoing discussion on comprehensive school reform.

Legislative Expectations Form the Basis of Survey and Interview Instruments

A major focus of this study is to examine the level of implementation of the legislative expectations for Title I schoolwide programs in the 1994 IASA. These legislative expectations are outlined in a booklet entitled, "An Overview of Title I Schoolwide Programs: Federal Legislative Expectations" (Wong and Meyer 1998), produced by the Laboratory for Student Success. Drawing on the key components of the schoolwide initiative as laid out in earlier drafts of the booklet, staff at the Laboratory for Student Success developed specific means of measuring implementation of various concepts, including schoolwide vision, organizational climate, instructional strategies, and curriculum standards.

To measure the level of Title I legislative expectations as implemented in our study sites, LSS staff created the following scaled indicators1 in both the teacher and parent survey instruments: student performance goals (13 items); standards/assessment (4 items); student evaluation (5 items); enriched curriculum (6 items); student-centered instruction (5 items); cooperative learning instruction (4 items); professional development (6 items); level and use of resources (8 items); accountability (6 items); and parent involvement (10 items). Further, we measure overall school climate and school governance using scales of the following indicators: teacher/student relationships (4 items), colleague relationships (5 items), shared decision making (3 items), principal leadership (5 items), scope of problems in school (13 items), student activities (4 items), student attitudes (6 items), and parent satisfaction toward schools (7 items). Item details will be included below when we present our findings.

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It should be noted that the focus and length of the teacher and parent questionnaires were somewhat different, to reflect respondents' different role and perspectives on the schoolwide program. While parent questionnaires focused on school climate and parent involvement issues, teacher questionnaires included these issues in addition to school governance. All the questionnaires included the 5-point Likert Scale with "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" responses. Scales were developed with the basis of both conceptual frameworks and empirical factor analysis. The mean of inter-item reliabilities of the scales was 0.80.

We measured classroom practices using an observation instrument for teachers and students during reading and/or math periods. Our focus was on instructional strategies, instructional settings, types of interactions between students and teachers, and students' on-task behavior. Instructional setting for students is differentiated in terms of students working in the whole class, in a small class, and in a individual setting. Instructional setting for teachers is differentiated by whole class, small class, teacher's desk, student's desk, and traveling. Interaction style for students included categories of no interaction, interaction with teachers, and interaction with others. Interaction style for teachers included categories of no interaction, interaction with instructional purposes, and interaction with managerial purposes for teachers. percentage of occurrences of each of these categories of interaction during 10 intervals within each class was separately calculated.

The research team also used open-ended questionnaires in their interviews with principals, teachers, and Title I coordinators at the district level. Questions are designed to connect school practices in the context of the systemic agenda set forth in the IASA. The types of questions asked included the following:

- Resource allocation: How do schools allocate federal, state, and local resources differently as a result of schoolwide programs?
- Teacher recruitment and professional development: How creative are schools in recruiting teachers?
- Do they engage in new kinds of professional development?
- Inclusion practices: Do schools move to eliminate pullout practices? Or do they maintain pull out for different categories of students?
- Curriculum design: How do schools decide on curricular materials? We transcribed interview and then analyzed them using NUD•IST to determine the relevance of the legislative expectations in school practices. We will present an analysis of our interviews later.

Selection of Schoolwide schools with Varying Performance but Comparable SES Characteristics

To develop a comparable pool of better-performing and poorly-performing Title I schoolwide schools, we employed statistical methods that modeled the schools' academic performance, given the composition of their student population, and to what extent it was comprised of at-risk students. We tried to identify schoolwides that varied in student performance but possessed similar socio-economic characteristics. Our school selection procedures began with each participating laboratory contacting one or more of the school districts within its region for research access. The LSS received detailed information on every elementary and middle school in each school district, from the districts via the lab. LSS used the core database to determine site selection. The database included the school-by-school data on achievement test scores, percent of students qualified for free and reduced price lunch, enrollment, racial characteristics, and level of the schools. It should be noted that districts used different tests and

the information they provided varied from 2 to 7 years. More specifically, the following tests were used: Iowa Test of Basic Skills in Atlanta, Chicago, and Denver; California Achievement Test in Cleveland; Michigan Assessment Test in Detroit; Texas Assessment of Basic Skills in Houston; New Jersey Early Warning Test in Trenton; Philadelphia Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills in Philadelphia; and Virginia School Assessment Program in all of Virginia's school districts.

Coordination of Data Collection

During the 1997-98 academic year, lab researchers gathered data from 33 schools in 9 urban districts and 4 countywide districts. To identify "what works," we created two samples of schools, using our statistical model of expected academic performance, given their income characteristics. All together, the cross-lab study team collected surveys from 597 teachers, 22 principals, and 692 parents. Interviews were conducted with 30 principals, 183 teachers, 11 parent focus groups, and 17 Title I district coordinators.

Each participating laboratory was responsible for obtaining permission to conduct research in its selected district(s). Reports and other policy documents on Title I were collected from each participating district. Schools were then selected based on regression analysis of their student achievement and socio-economic characteristics as mentioned above. Each laboratory then made contact with the sample of schools and worked out the site visit schedule. Lab researchers visited the study sites to explain the purpose of the project to the principal and teachers, and to finalize the data collection plan. At each participating school, researchers administered questionnaires to teachers and principals during a faculty meeting, with the exception of a few schools where teachers completed the questionnaires individually and returned them by mail to the researchers or the laboratory. Parent questionnaires were completed at home. Observation for reading and math classes was conducted by trained researchers, using an observation instrument developed by the Laboratory for Student Success at Temple University. One or more researchers from each collaborating laboratory were trained by LSS on how conduct classroom observation, to ensure consistency in the observations. Before researchers conducted their classroom observation, they requested a list of teachers and students from the study sites. Using this information, lab researchers randomly selected six students in each classroom for focused observation in terms of teacher-student interaction. Each observation lasted for about 45 minutes: 5 minutes total for a teacher (10 intervals for 5 seconds each) and 3 minutes for each of the 6 students (10 intervals for 3 seconds each).

In short, this cross-lab collaboration involves many hours of planning and development. Several meetings were held to discuss and revise data collection strategies and instruments. Preliminary analyses were circulated and inputs were provided by participating lab researchers. This study is not only an unprecedented effort on the part of the labs to conduct, it also makes a timely contribution to the national discussion on improving Title I.

Notes

1. Each scale is made of relevant items from the questionnaire (the reason why we use indicators rather than individual questions for analysis is that a composite indicator is much more stable and reliable) For example, the student performance goal includes 13 items from the teacher questionnaire. These 13 questions were selected due to the conceptual basis and empirical factor analysis results. Also, Cronbach's alpha (inter-item reliability, a commonly used statistical method) indicates this scale is reliable (.88). Examples of the 13 questions are: "My school has clearly articulated performance goals for all students for reading, math, etc."; "My school places a high priority on learning"; "I demonstrate support of my school's goals for student performance". It is better to use the scale, rather than individual questions, to represent concepts such as student performance goal and accountability.

2. Each question in the teacher questionnaire includes the 5 Likert scale for the responses: "strongly disagree", "disagree", "uncertain", "agree", "strongly agree". Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each scale to check if each scale included questions that go together (if a scale has low alpha, it means that the scale includes questions that don't belong together and needs to be adjusted). The range of the reliabilities for all the scales is .63 to .88 and the mean is .80.